

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

A. Summary of the Amendment

This is a full and timely response to the non-final Office Action dated November 23, 2004. Reexamination and reconsideration are courteously requested. By way of the present amendment, claim 1 is amended. Further, claims 2 to 3 are canceled. Thus, claims 1, and 4 to 31 remain pending for the Examiner's consideration, with claim 1 being the only independent claim.

B. Allowable Subject Matter

The examiner has acknowledged that claims 3 and 4 are directed to allowable subject matter. Applicants thank the Examiner for a thorough examination of these claims.

C. Unexamined Claims

The Office Action indicates that only claims 1 to 7 are pending, and in fact, only claims 1 to 7 have been examined. During a telephone conference with the Examiner on February 22, 2005, the Examiner indicated that an oversight is the reason that claims 8 to 31 are not addressed in the Office Action.

D. Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §§ 102 (b), 103 (a)

Claims 1, 2, and 5 to 7 are rejected as being anticipated by, or unpatentable over, any one of U.S. Patent Nos. 5,804,523 ("Oda"), 5,523,267 ("Tanaka"), 5,219,500 ("Yoshida"), and 4,401,78 ("Morgan"). These rejections are respectfully traversed. Further, the present amendment incorporates the features of claim 3 into independent claim 1; since claim 3 is deemed allowable by

the Examiner, the present amendment is believed to place the application in condition for allowance.

E. Conclusion

In view of Applicant's amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that Examiner's objections and rejections have been overcome. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that the application is now in condition for allowance, and such allowance is therefore earnestly requested. Should the Examiner have any questions or wish to further discuss this application, Applicants request that the Examiner contact the Applicants attorneys at the below-listed telephone number.

If for some reason Applicants have not requested a sufficient extension and/or have not paid a sufficient fee for this response and/or for the extension necessary to prevent abandonment on this application, please consider this as a request for an extension for the required time period and/or authorization to charge Deposit Account No. 50-2091 for any fee which may be due.

Respectfully submitted,

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